

But behold! It is easy to point fingers. And even easier to point fingers at people long gone. And particularly easy to point fingers when contexts are oversimplified. And here we enter the content of the fascinating book by Chesley Sanger with the simple and content-encompassing title *Scottish Arctic whaling*. Leaving aside any moral opposition to whaling the reader of this book might have, from the very beginning of this detailed study of Scottish engagement in the whale hunt of the Arctic it becomes clear what important contribution whaling has had in fostering globalisation and competitive trade particularly between European nations 'in a time of almost continuous conflict' (p. 35) as a response to Arctic interests – an issue which, in Arctic contexts, is little explored (see for example Heininen & Southcott, 2010). At the same time it becomes unmistakably clear how the Arctic marine environment and the establishment of an industry go hand in hand with one another. Unsurprisingly, in the 18th century it was, to a large extent, (un-)favourable environmental conditions as well as times of war that impacted the establishment of an English and Scottish whaling industry. With regard to the environment, especially in light of current oil prospecting in the Arctic, this should be borne in mind and Sanger's treatise is a stark reminder that industries of the south are merely guests in the high north, albeit very powerful ones.

This notwithstanding, Sanger shows in great detail and supported by a great number of graphs and tables how the Scottish whaling industry in the 18th century was subject to 'complex forces often working towards both expansion and reduction in the Scottish trade' (p. 58) but that it 'displayed remarkable consistency in the inter-war period' (p. 61). Unfortunately, Sanger does not engage further in discussing the fact that during times of war whaling endeavours were weakened *inter alia* by the desertion of the ships by their crews due to forced enlisting to the navy (see for instance p. 67). To be fair, however, it is doubtful that much information on these men exists in the first place. This would, in any case, be of tremendous interest from a socio-legal perspective. In general, the book does not engage in a more detailed discussion of the local economies, meaning the economies in specific harbour towns dependent on whaling, but rather provides a very detailed overview of the dynamics that drove or hindered the whaling economy in Scotland, closely paralleled by the whaling economy in England. Only very marginally socio-legal issues are touched upon and for this reviewer more details on the on-the-ground impacts of Scottish Arctic whaling would have greatly benefitted the book. This is particularly the case since the complexity of the interplay

between Arctic whaling and the local economy is highlighted by the author who notes that 'the whale fishery permeated all sectors of local economies and contributed to the growth and diversification of the economic base of each whaling town' (p. 49). Once again, however, the question remains whether much information exists that allows for an analysis of that kind.

This being said, the book is in itself impressive and provides a long overdue addition to the history of whaling in the North Atlantic and in the Arctic. *Scottish Arctic whaling* therefore adds wonderfully to the better understanding of the global interest in whales as a resource and the dynamics that drove the establishment of modern economies in (sub-)Arctic regions. Read in conjunction with, for example, Dickinson & Sanger's treatise on *Twentieth-century shore-station whaling in Newfoundland and Labrador* (Dickinson & Sanger, 2005) or Ryan's very detailed history of Newfoundland sealing (Ryan, 1994) a picture of the maritime and resource-based economies emerges that allows for the better analyses of contemporary issues of Arctic scholarship. This is especially relevant since the author shows how the whaling industry in Davis Strait had transferred to a sealing industry, an economic branch still very much disputed to this day (see Sellheim, 2016).

I can therefore conclude with a strong recommendation of this book for audiences interested in the history of whaling in general and particularly in the Arctic. Also scholars of Newfoundland and North Atlantic histories will find this book, which also contains several photographs, truly enriching (Nikolas Sellheim, Polar Cooperation Research Centre, Kobe University, 2-1 Rokkodai-cho, Nada-ku, Kobe 657-8501, Japan (nikolas.sellheim@people.kobe-u.ac.jp)).

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The magical world of the cold seas. Alexander Semenov. 2016. Moscow: Paulsen. 270 p, illustrated, hardcover. ISBN 978-5-98797-131-4. US\$60.00.
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One of the most interesting developments in what might be called 'polar publishing' has been the recent emergence onto the scene of Paulsen of Moscow. This publishing house has a list, mostly in Russian but some in English, that has many items of interest to readers of *Polar Record*, and the current volume is certainly one of those. It is a combination of 'coffee table' book, setting out wonderful photographs in this case of submarine wildlife in the

Arctic, with a very informative and detailed text. This is rare; in such cases one is usually confronted by photographs with a short and fairly trivial text, or a meaty volume with limited illustrations that seems to be intended for specialists. This book manages to be both.

The first chapter relates to plankton ranging from hydroids through the clinging jellyfish, larger jellyfish and ctenophores to the elusive appendicularians. There are some simply magnificent portrayals of these life forms and the colour reproductions are superb. Of particular interest is the section on *Aequorea*, the bioluminescent jellyfish that shimmer with a bright blueish-green light. It is noted that these colours arise from various proteins and that work on them resulted in the award of the 2008

Nobel Prize in Chemistry. The pictures of the mobile organisms are extremely good and must have been very difficult to obtain. From that point of view this is probably the most inspiring section of the book.

The next section is entitled *Life – attached* with the note that ‘every boulder is home to thousands of organisms’. The author points out that sometimes researchers have to ‘go through’ several ‘floors’ of organisms to reach the substrate and that therefore many submarine dives might be needed to ‘film and collect material from one single boulder’. Groups featured in this chapter include the hydrozoan ploypys and it is noted that some of these ‘can leave serious burns on the human skin’ and therefore it is wise ‘to keep your wits about you’ when descending. Tubularians and the tiny *Acaulis* are photographed, as is *Actinia*, a group of sedentary cnidarians, stalked jellyfish, soft corals, bryozoans, brachiopods, sponges, sedentary polychaetes and, of course, crustaceans.

The final chapter in the book is entitled *Wanderers*. It includes chitons and nudibranchs but possibly the most stunning section of the book relates to the cephalopods that are liberally illustrated. This section stresses the diverse nature of the group and some of the photographs of the varieties of octopus are masterpieces. The chapter also includes the echinoderms, polychaetes and mobile crustaceans.

The texts concerning the various animals featured are informative, for specialists and non-specialists alike, are clearly written in excellent English and are easy to read. The photographs throughout are simply superb.

Warmly recommended for all with polar interests, whether one reads every word or simply flips through admiring the photographs. The price is very reasonable for a volume of this quality (Ian R. Stone, Scott Polar Research Institute, University of Cambridge, Lensfield Road, Cambridge CB2 1ER (irs30@cam.ac.uk)).

Global challenges in the Arctic region: sovereignty, environment and geopolitical balance. Elena Conde and Sara Iglesias Sanchez (editors). 2017. Oxon: Routledge. 464 p. ISBN 978-1-472-46325-8. £100.00.
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Edited by Elena Conde and Sara Iglesias Sanchez, *Global challenges in the Arctic region* is a collective volume that gathers together several experts from different fields in order to offer a ‘big picture’ regarding current issues in the Arctic. In that respect, the book is partly successful in providing its readers with an understanding and perspective of the polar region in the 21st century. Indeed, the scientific literature pushes the boundaries for conveying new considerations and ideas. Separated into five main parts, the book’s ambition is to emphasise the underlying connection between diverse topics and academic study. The ultimate goal of this book is to intertwine different fields of science to highlight an influential interdisciplinary approach.

In the introduction, the contributors stress the legal and political complexity of the Arctic region, in order to discuss and reflect on current debates on various issues throughout the 22 chapters. They highlight the complex sovereignty issues in the Arctic connected to environmental, geopolitical and legal approaches. There is also a specific section dedicated to the human dimension in the region. The authors underline the necessity to work jointly with other related disciplines (such as international relations and anthropology, etc.) in close cooperation by intertwining them.

In summary, the Arctic challenges raised underline the evolution of perceptions from both inside and outside the region. This collective volume is structured to frame the main trends surrounding the polar region. It presents the progressive shift from an isolated and remote area to a space that is fully integrated in the globalisation phenomenon, and its costs (Chapter 17). Further, it emphasises the need for monitoring and regulating future development in the area, such as fishing and maritime traffic, and by doing so it stresses the requirement to cope with negative consequences, including overfishing and maritime accidents.

As a secondary observation, each chapter is well-sourced and documented, which suggests quality scientific work. It is

also worth mentioning, as several chapters are dedicated to legal issues in the region, that the legal-based sources hold a significant part in the structuring of this collective volume.

The authors include an astonishingly wide and holistic view of the players in the area, which include Arctic states, inter-governmental organizations, and indigenous people. Ikeshima refers to the Arctic states as legitimate players and analysis the inclusion of non-Arctic states in the ‘polar play-board’. In that respect, Rasmus Gjedssø Bertelsen explains the Chinese strategy in the Arctic through flexible and smart diplomacy mainly relying on science. Indeed, science stands as a vector of influence for attempting to curb the current state of affairs in the region.

Then, the book offers significant space for the legal issues related to the Arctic. Indeed, the context of transformation, highly stressed in most parts of the book, and the implications on the legal framework in the area. Obviously, scholars have come to study the area with greater interest in recent years. As a result, several scientific reviews have tackled issues such as the Yearbook of Polar Law. These reviews propose several ways to study this topic. Leading a prospective analysis, Timo Koivurova stresses, ‘by focusing on Arctic law as one general whole, it is possible to better understand the legal arrangements in the Arctic’ (p. 14). Indeed, the authors raise key legal issues in which the Arctic is referred to ‘as a unique place where legal innovations are needed’ (p. 14). Among the main subjects analysed, the maritime routes and natural resources are under the scope of legal issues (Chapter 4, Chapter 10 and Chapter 14).

Finally, a strong positive component points toward the authors’ proposals to implement new frameworks and evolution to enhance Arctic dynamics. For example, regarding the relationship between the EU and Greenland, Pelaudeix suggests the need for clarification of the legal nexus between Greenland, Denmark and the EU. According to her, it would enable more consistent and responsible support for the development of Greenland. As for Arctic governance, Ikeshima suggests involving the G7 (or even the G20) in Arctic governance, as these groups are already in charge of debating global issues. The Arctic might be a paradigm of numerous global challenges, as suggested Gomez de Agreda.

Despite the various proposals and suggestions made by the contributors, a significant part of this collective volume navigates